THE PANOPLIST;

OR,

THE CHRISTIAN'S ARMORY.

No. 36.] MAY, 1808. [No. 12. Vol. III.

Biography.

SKETCH OF THE LIFE AND CHARACTER OF THE REV. DR. SAMUEL WEST.

From the Anthology.

The design of biography is to celebrate useful talents, to record patriotic labours, and to exhibit characteristic traits of virtue. The distinguished mental powers, the public spirit, and scientifical researches of the late Rev. Samuel West, of New Bedford, fully entitle him to biographical notice, and he may justly claim a place in the records of posthumous fame. Although the theatre on which he acted was retired, the spectators few, and his life spent with little diversity of event, yet his mind presented strong and prominent features: and, had he lived in Europe, his reputation and usefulness had fallen little short of that of *Buxtorf*, *Kennicot*, *Mede*, *Poole*, &c. for his mind was doubtless equal to any exertions of these men, and, with their literary means, no common embarrassments would have presented obstacles retarding his progress to the summits of their theological eminence. Although his learned connexions were few, and his life spent among those incapable of comprehending many of his ideas, or profiting from his treasury of biblical information, yet were he to pass off the stage without any biographical notice, it would occasion regret to the religious, the grateful, and the learned, who knew his intrinsic merit, and were favoured with his friendship.

Father West was one of the first men in the New England congregational churches on account of his scriptural knowledge, skill in the prophecies, and a ready recollection of every text, which enabled him upon the shortest notice to collect and pertinently apply all the passages of scripture, connected with his subject, and conducive to the purpose of his argument. The epithet of *Father* above given, probably originated in the conviction of his judicious friends, that his sincere benevolence, his faithful and discreet counsels, might be safely relied on, while his literary pre-emi-

nence, his treasures of criticism, wit, and historical information, justified the continuance of so respectful an appellation.

He was born in Yarmouth, Cape Cod, March 4th, O. S. A. D. 1730, and died at Tiverton, R. I. Sept. 24th, 1807, and was buried at New Bedford, where he had been pastor over a congregational church 43 years. His parents, though in moderate circumstances, were reputable, and he laboured with them till he had passed the 20th year of his age. During the earlier, as well the latter part of his minority, he discovered such uncommon traits of genius, and symptoms of a strong mind, as, together with his pre-eminent knowledge of the sacred scriptures, and those other few books thrown in his way, awakened the attention of the few intelligent and good men who happened to know him. They solicited, and finally obtained his father's consent, though at a late period, to fit him for college, which was completed in the short term of six months under the care of the Rev. Mr. Green, of Barnstable. His rapid improvement, while at the seminary in Cambridge, was such, as to give him a rank for genius and learning with the most distinguished of his class.

After leaving college, his application to study was unremitted, and though devoted to almost every branch of science, yet Divinity was his main object; in this he peculiarly excelled.

In the later stages of life he is said to have applied himself to chemistry, in which it is testified by adepts, that he was a distinguished proficient. The year 1775 awakened his attention to politics, and he became a whig partizan, writing many forcible pieces in the newspapers, which animated the confident, and revived the spirits of the timid for the important contest. These speculations gratified his friends, and were highly applauded by the public. He also brought himself into a considerable degree of notice by decyphering Dr. Church's letter, which was written at the commencement of the revolutionary war, and exposed to a relation, who had joined the party of the enemy, the particular state of our army. The alarm which that letter occasioned is still remembered, and it was natural for every one to inquire who the person was that made it intelligible for the public eye. And it was acknowledged by the writer, that it was done very correctly.

Dr. West was a member of the convention for forming the constitution of this State, as also that of the United States. He was an honourary member of the Academy of Arts and Sciences instituted at Philadelphia, and of that at Boston. He received from the university in Cambridge, the degree of Doctor in Divinity, A. D. 1793.

In the latter part of his life, his memory failed to that degree, that it was with difficulty he could recognize his most familiar friends. The vast treasure of his ideas began to vanish at the age of seventy years, and during the course of seven succeeding years, the great man disappeared, and it was an afflictive sight to his friends, and all who had known him in the glory of his understanding, to perceive he

had survived all his wit and learning.

Doctor West, notwithstanding his powers and knowledge, was not very popular, as a preacher, excepting upon particular occurrences.

He used no notes in preaching, during the last thirty years of his ministry, unless upon some special occasion. He had so retentive a memory, and such perfect knowledge of every subject, that he could preach an hour upon any text without any premeditation, and yet with coherence and unity of design. It is to be regretted that he left behind him so little in writing. Had he, in several periods of his life, written more, and used more bodily exercise, he might have been useful much longer.

His publications were, a Sermon at the ordination of the Rev. Samuel West, of Needham; Sermon before the provincial convention at Watertown, 1776; Sermon at the anniversary of the Fathers' landing at Plymouth, 1777; Sermon at the ordination of the Rev. Mr. Allyn at Duxborough, 1788; a small tract on Infant Baptism, and Essays on Liberty and Necessity, in two parts, in which the arguments of William Edwards and others, for necessity, are considered. Printed at New Bedford, 1795.*

* This book was replied to by Dr. Edwards, and a rejoinder to him was promised by Dr. West to the public, and so far prepared that it might be finished with a little exertion, if the public attention and liberality were to call for, and support the publication. It is desirable, that some person of science, and metaphysical acumen, would review Dr. West's Essays, in some of our periodical works.

Doctor West's *style* of writing and preaching had nothing in it peculiarly deserving imitation, though the matter of his discourses was pertinent and solid. They were always independent and commonly original in their form: any defects in the tone and inflexion of his voice were always compensated by rich information and irresistible force of argument.

His *manner of studying* upon religious subjects was not wholly peculiar to himself, being similar to that of Mr. Locke, and Dr. Taylor; to this he adhered with strictness. Without any discoverable partiality for, or prejudice against the manner and systems of Calvin, or Arminius, Athanasius, Arius or Socinus, his appeal was always direct to the Bible, which he was often wont to say "was its own best interpreter." He was therefore more frequent in the use of a concordance than a commentator, and never had recourse to the latter but in cases of great obscurity. His common phraseology was, "Moses says,—The prophet says—Our Saviour says—The apostles say,"—and while he substantiated his doctrines on words and phrases clearly defined and explained, he would not lay much stress on *particles*, or ground an argument of the truth of an essential doctrine on the Greek article ὁ, or any other particle in the Hebrew, Greek or Latin languages.

His *method of teaching* his pupils in divinity was always consonant with the protestant principles of free inquiry, and the sufficiency of the scriptures. He endeavoured to make his pu-

pils understand before he required their belief. His primary lessons repected the habit of attention, love of the truth, zealous disposition or research; and instead of expecting from them to imbibe at once all he should teach, he was satisfied if they would only examine carefully what he had said. His pupils not only acquired historical and critical information, but principles of interpretation and reasoning, and no man was better able to convert the selfsufficient dogmatist into an elementary divine, and establish his faith on the basis of axioms, which he would never relinquish but from the impulses of folly and vice.

His *opinions* it would be improper to detail, without adducing express authorities from his writings. It may however be observed, that he thought a willingness to be damned was not a Christian exercise; that the evidence brought to prove a total depravity in mankind was defective and insufficient; that men possess a *self-determining* power, without which there could be neither freedom, virtue or vice, praise or blame; and of consequence he was opposed to the Hopkinsian, or rather Edwardian system of ideas, with the supporters of which he was frequently in controversy.

His manners and domestic character were peculiar. The former were indeed unpolished, but such were the charms of his conversation that he was an acceptable companion not only to literary men, but to all discerning people of fashion. His exterior figure, deportment and temper, resembled those of Dr. Johnson, if we may decide from the portrait given of the latter by artists and biographers. In domestic affairs he was wholly unconcerned, till compelled to attention by imperious necessity. This deficiency was discreetly supplied by his assiduous, intelligent consort, and will be forgiven in studious men, by those who consider the incompatability of a detail solicitude in household matters, with a strong thirst for knowledge. No man can serve two masters. The reports circulated of Dr. West's eccentricities are most of them questionable, and all of them might pass without a smile in such as knew his substantial merits.

The subject of this biographical notice had his blemishes, and they are mentioned not to depreciate the dead, but to give an instructive hint to the living. A new book of merit, or the conversation of a sentimental friend, was devoured with an avidity, which absorbed his whole attention, and made him neglect the common rules of decorum. He could not readily forgive those, who doubted the truth of certain favourite opinions, or reminded him of any instances of credulity, in which he was deceived by his benevolence; and being wholly absorbed by the utility of the *end*, he became blind in discerning the *means* of attaining it. A stranger also might suppose, from the manner of his devotion, that he was less devout than his intimate acquaintance knew him to be; for, to his friends, it was certain, that neither tone or gesture were any infallible criteria of faith or piety. He believed more than most men, and felt as much as any man, at those times, and

upon those occasions, when it was proper to loosen the reins of thought, and yield to the full control of sentimental emotions.

But truth and justice oblige us to compensate the mention of such failings, by saying that no man could accuse Father West of the wilful violation of any principle of moral rectitude and sincerity. By education, habit and grace, he sustained the character of strict veracity, steady patriotism and philanthropy, unshaken evangelical faith, and deserves to be enrolled as a Rabbi in the Christian Israel.

Without vanity, he was always gratified by attentions. Knowledge made him humble; and without any expressions of assurance, he always signified a modest hope that he had closed with the terms of salvation proposed in the gospel, and trusted he should enter into his Master's joy, believing that mortality would be swallowed up of life, and that saints will rise in the likeness of their glorious Redeemer.

Jan. 20, 1808.

EXTRACTS RESPECTING THE REV. J. BROWN OF HADDINGTON, SCOTLAND.

In learning, Mr. Brown's attainments were eminent, corresponding with the insatiable ardor of his mind after general knowledge. He was also eminent in piety. Prayer was his delight. In conversation, it was evidently his constant aim to reform and to edify. Through stedfast faith in the divine promises, he seemed to have attained such an evenness of mind, as never to be much transported with joy, or much depressed with sorrow. During his last illness, he discovered a remarkably thankful frame of mind for the smallest favour; and so satisfied was he with the dispensations of Providence, that for three or four months before his death, he was not heard to utter a discontented or uneasy word. The following are some of his expressions during his last illness.

"If Christ be magnified in my life, that is the great matter I wish for. Often we read history as atheists or deists, rather than as Christians. To read of events, without observing the hand of God in them, is to read as atheists; and to read and not observe how all events conduce to carry on the work of redemption, is to read as deists. The doctrine of grace, reigning through righteousness, is good to live with, and good to die with. What a happy life a Christian might have, were he alway persuaded of the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord! Were there any such thing as exchange of learning, I would willingly quit all my knowledge of languages and other things, were it a thousand times more extensive, experimentally to know what that meaneth, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." I have met with trials, yet the Lord hath been so kind to me, that I think, if he were to give me as many years as I have lived in the world,

I would not desire a single circumstance in my lot to be changed, but only that I had less sin. I have often wondered at the favour which men have showed me; but much more at the favour of God to *such a great transgressor*. Men may talk against the sovereignty of redeeming love as they will; but had it not been sovereign, infinitely sovereign, I should certainly have been damned. O how these words, "He loved me and gave himself for me," have penetrated my heart. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all within me, bless his holy name."

Addressing himself to his two sons in the ministry, he said with peculiar earnestness, "O labour, labour for Christ while you have strength. I now repent I have been so slothful in his service. Justly may he say of me, "sixty years long have I been grieved with this rebel." And justly may I add, "where my sin hath abounded, God's grace hath much more abounded." Never grudge either purse or person for him. I can say I was never a loser by any time spent, or by any money given, for him. O the pains God has been at to save me; and the pains I have been at to destroy myself! If doubting, disputing, and trampling on his kindness, could have made him change his love, it would never have been continued to me. Such wickedness would have provoked any but a God of infinite love, to cast me into hell. I have served several masters, but none so kind as Christ. I have dealt with many honest men; but no creditor like Christ. Had I ten thousand hearts, they should all be given to *him*, and had I ten thousand bodies, they should all be employed in labouring for his honour. We should reckon him a madman, who should throw away a *father's estate;* but he is infinitely more foolish, who should cast off a *father's God.*"

Hearing of the spread of the gospel, "Well, (said he) may it spread. It is the only source of my comfort, and every sinner is as welcome as I. How pleasant, that neither great sins, nor great troubles, can alter these consolations. O that I had all the world around me, that I might tell them of Christ. Had I ten thousand tongues, and ten thousand hearts, and were employing all in commendation of Christ, I could not do for his honour what he hath deserved. I think the early death of my father and mother, the death of a beloved wife and children, wrought for my good. I could not but notice, when God took away these, he always supplied their room with himself. May he deal thus with you, when I die. Were it left to me, whether to choose life or death, I would refer it wholly to God. What I know of religion is this, I have found great weakness and wickedness in myself; and grace, mercy, and loveliness in Christ. O what must Christ be in himself, when he sweetens heaven, sweetens scripture, sweetens ordinances, sweetens earth, and even sweetens trials. The finished righteousness of Christ is the only foundation of my hope. Ever since God hath dealt savingly with my heart, I have never had any comfort in the thought, that my sins were small, but in the belief that the blood

of Christ cleanseth from all sin."

Toward the close of life he became exceedingly weak, and spake but little; but the joy of God's salvation, and the peace which passeth understanding, continued with him to the end. He said to a brother in the ministry, "O Mr. ——, the Lord is my strength, and my song, and he is become my salvation."

The last words he was heard to utter were, *my Christ*. He fell asleep in Jesus, June 19, 1787.

Religious Communications.

THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN VINDICATED.

In the history of the Old Testament, there are some things recorded, relative to God's dealings with the Jews, which men unfriendly to the scriptures have alleged as objections against their credibility; and which serious minds have thought difficult to be reconciled to the benevolence of the divine government. Of these, one of the principal is the conquest and extermination of the seven nations of Canaan.

It is asked, "What right had the Jews to expel a people from their own country, of which, for hundreds of years, they had been in quiet possession? And if, on any pretence, they conquered them, was it not cruel to destroy them without distinction, after submission? If the transaction itself was unjust and cruel, how can we suppose that it was commanded of God, a Being of justice and mercy?"

As this transaction has been by many misunderstood, and by some misrepresented, I shall endeavour to state and explain it, and to shew its consistency with the divine equity and with national justice.

In the first place it should always be remembered, that "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof," and that he has a right to dispose of it among the children of men according to his own sovereign pleasure.

Nations, as well as persons, have their respective rights in distinction from one another; but neither nations nor persons have rights paramount to that of the supreme Proprietor. He may raise up one nation or one man, and put down another, as his wisdom shall see best; and none has authority to arraign his justice. He has a right to dispose of men's lives, as well as of their properties. And in respect of his justice, it makes no difference, whether a nation doomed to ruin be destroyed by diseases, by storms, by earthquakes, or by war; and whether they be consumed in fifty years or in five; for if God may take away men's lives, (and we see, he does take them away) he may employ his own instruments, and choose his own time. If the Jews had a warrant from God to execute his purpose against those nations, and knew the warrant

was from him, they were bound to obey. That God can speak to men, and make them know who speaks, and what he says, none, who believe his perfect wisdom and power, will deny. That God spake to Moses, and by him to the Jews, requiring them to dispossess those nations and occupy their land, was made manifest by a series of conspicuous and indubitable miracles.

It should be observed, secondly, that there is a great difference between a *warrant* for a *particular* transaction, and a *law* for a *general rule* of conduct. The chief magistrate of a state may give a warrant to an officer to execute a criminal; but the supreme authority never makes a law, empowering that officer to execute every man whom he wishes to remove. God commanded Abraham to sacrifice his son; and had not the command been recalled, the patriarch had a warrant to proceed; for he knew that God had a right to take the life of this son in such time, and by such means, as he pleased. But God has never made a law authorising parents to destroy their children at their own pleasure. So God gave a special warrant to the Jews to conquer and possess a particular country; but he gave them no standing law to conquer every country, which they might wish to possess. And for nations, from this particular warrant, to infer a right to exterminate other nations, would be as absurd, as if a sheriff, from his warrant to execute a certain criminal, should conclude, *he* had a right to hang all whom he called criminals.

It should be considered, thirdly, that those nations were in such a depraved state, that they could no longer subsist in their national capacity. God waited upon them, till "their iniquities were full, and their land spewed them out." If it be ever just for God to destroy a people for their wickedness, it must have been just in this case. They had renounced the true God, and introduced the most abominable and barbarous idolatries. They sacrificed their children to the idols, which they had made; they practised every species of magic and witchcraft, that imagination could devise, or evil spirits suggest; they abandoned themselves to the grossest impurities, and refrained from no kind of wickedness, which their depraved hearts could contrive. They were in a state of almost perpetual warfare among themselves, and had lately expelled one of their own nations. It was a mercy to the world and to posterity, that such a people should be subdued, many of the adults destroyed, and the remainder brought under a better government.

Let it be considered, fourthly, that for 40 years, they were admonished to repent and reform. God had demonstrated his unity, supremacy, and glory by a great variety of stupendous works before the people of Israel. These works were known to the nations of Canaan; for the Jews, during their abode in the wilderness, were near, and sometimes on the borders of Canaan. Rahab says to the Jewish spies, "Your terror is fallen upon us, and all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you; for we have heard how the Lord dried up the red sea, when ye came out of Egypt,

and what ye did to the two kings of the Amorites, which were on the other side of Jordan. When we heard of these things, our hearts did melt. The Lord your God is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath."

But though God had given such displays of his majesty, as filled that people with terror and amazement, they were not reclaimed from their idolatry and wickedness. And a people which cannot be reclaimed must be ripe for destruction. In God's dealings toward them, there is nothing which looks like injustice.

Fifthly: The war, which the Jews carried on against them, was commenced on justifiable grounds, and conducted with more humanity than other wars in that day, and with as much humanity as wars often are in these days among the most civilized nations.

In that war the Jews were not the aggressors, but were first attacked by their enemies. While they sojourned in the wilderness, they were peaceable and inoffensive to the people near whom they passed. They marched through no king's territory without permission first obtained. If permission could not be obtained, they turned off, and took another route. But they were several times attacked without the least provocation; first by the Amalekites, afterward by the Canaanites; then by the Amorites, and by the people of Bashan, who all, at different times, sent armies against them, when they had received from them no injury or offence. Those nations had actually made war upon the Hebrews, before the latter attempted an invasion of their country.

In carrying on the war the Hebrews used no unprecedented severity toward their enemies. By the usage of nations in those days, captives were considered as the property of the captors, and were usually put to death, or made slaves. But the Jews were ordered to proceed toward their enemies with more humanity. When they came to a city to besiege it, they were first to proclaim peace to it. If the city surrendered on summons, the inhabitants were all to be spared; only they were to be made tributaries. And if they submitted to the government, which God had instituted for his own people, they were to enjoy privileges much superior to those, which they enjoyed under their own kings; for to these they were slaves and vassals. If the city refused to surrender, and chose to take the chance of war, then, after it was reduced, the people were indeed to be put to the sword. This perhaps looks horrible; and war is, in its nature, a horrible business. But it is no more than is often practised in this civilized age. Whenever a fortified place is taken by storm, the garrison is at the mercy of the assailants, who by the rules of war are warranted to refuse quarter. And even this severity was permitted only toward the seven nations of Canaan. In a city taken from other nations, the women and children were always to be spared. And in no case, where a people submitted on summons, were any of them to be made perpetual slaves or pris-

oners, but they were all allowed to enjoy liberty, as well as life, under the Jewish government.

The images and altars of those idolatrous nations were to be destroyed; for as long as they worshipped their false gods, they would not be subjects of that government, of which Jehovah was the supreme head. Their renouncing idolatry, and acknowledging one all-perfect Deity, was necessarily implied in their submission to their conquerors. The continuance of their superstitions would have been a perpetual snare to the Jews.

They were to be tributaries, but not slaves. They could not be officers in the army or rulers in the government; but personal freedom and security they might enjoy. No harder terms were imposed on them, than are always imposed on conquered nations; that they submit to, and be peaceable under the government of their conquerors.

They were not subject to taxation or military duty. It was therefore fit, that they should pay a tribute of manual labour in the public national works, as an acknowledgment to the government under which they enjoyed protection. This was instead of the taxation and military duty to which the Jews were subject.

View the case as it is stated in scripture, and there appears nothing, which looks like singular severity in the divine dealings, or like wanton cruelty in the Jewish proceedings. The command to consume without pity all whom God should deliver into their hands, could respect those only who were conquered in battle, after they had rejected terms of peace; for no other could properly be said "to be delivered into the hands" of the conquerors. All the rest made peace, and were preserved. Accordingly we find, that when the Hivites, who had made peace, were threatened by the neighbouring nations, Joshua immediately marched an army for their succour. He faithfully performed the league, which he had made with them.

Hence it appears, that in examining the scripture, we must take a comprehensive view of the subject on which it treats. Particular passages, taken by themselves, may seem dark and intricate, when, in a connected view, they will appear just and beautiful. We never should make a particular passage an objection against the scripture, till we are sure we rightly understand the passage. The apostle says, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God." That this position is true, we have sufficient evidence. And it is always unjust to allege particular difficulties as objections against a general truth founded on competent evidence. The particular difficulties which we meet with in scripture, may be owing to our own misconception, inattention, and neglect of inquiry, or unfairness in making inquiry. And certainly it is much more rational to ascribe these difficulties to our own ignorance, than to suppose, that all the evidence of divine authority attending the scripture is mere delusion.

It would help us much in interpreting scripture, and in justifying the ways of Providence, if we would keep in mind the sovereignty of God. We are ex-

ceedingly apt to call that unjust in God toward his creatures, which would be unjust in them toward one another. Justice in all beings is the same in its nature, but its acts and exercises may be different according to the different relations and authorities of the agents. God is supreme and infinitely wise. His ways and thoughts are not as ours. The world and all creatures in it, men, and all they possess, are God's property and at his disposal. Though he will injure none of his creatures, yet he has a sovereign right to deal with them, as his perfect rectitude shall choose, and his unerring wisdom shall direct. Though one man, or one nation, has not a right to dispose of the property of other men, or other nations, yet God has a right to order and change the conditions of men and nations according to his own will.

We find in scripture many things done by divine command, which, without such warrant, no man would have had a right to do; as in civil society, law may require or allow things, which no man may do without law. But it does not hence follow, that the law is wrong; for in the government there is that authority, which no private person may assume to himself. When we censure the ways of God, because he has ordered certain things, which men had no right to do of their own will, we, in our thoughts, place the supreme Being on a level with ourselves.

This piece of history instructs us, that the wickedness of nations is the cause of their destruction. The land of Canaan was promised to Abraham and his seed, 400 years before they took possession. This promise was made on a divine foresight, that the Canaanites would so fill up the measure of their guilt, as to be no longer the subjects of divine forbearance. They were finally destroyed, because their iniquities were full. God threatened his own people, that if they practised the same iniquities, for which the Canaanites were destroyed, they must experience the same marks of his displeasure. God's threatenings were awfully verified; and they are recorded for our admonition. The Jews were broken off from the covenant of God by their unbelief. We stand by faith. Let us not be highminded, but fear.

ERASTUS.

SURVEY OF NEW ENGLAND CHURCHES.

Concluded from page 402.

ALTHOUGH the design of this Survey is unfinished, I must now offer to the churches of Christ my closing address. And I know not in what better way I can do this, than by unfolding to them the affecting and awful sentiments contained in the following parable of him who spake as never man spake.

The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. And when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? from whence

then hath it tares? He said unto them, an enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, nay; lest, while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together till the harvest; and in the time of the harvest, I will say to the reapers, gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn.

To his disciples Jesus afterwards gave the following explanation of the parable.

"He that sowed the good seed is the Son of Man; the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them who do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear let him hear."

The first sentiment which presents itself from the parable is this; *that Jesus Christ has a people in this ruined world;* a people redeemed by his blood, sanctified by his Spirit, and set apart for himself. "The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom." From our apostate race, Christ is raising up a spiritual kingdom. This kingdom he has for a time stationed on earth, in the midst of a wicked world. Nevertheless it is a distinct body. Though his people are in the world, they are not of the world, but are citizens of heaven. They have a character in some measure suited to their final home. Christ has chosen them out of the world, and ordained them that they should be holy, the sons of God without rebuke, bearing the resemblance of their Saviour and King.

Upon them he sets the marks of his special love, forms them into one family, and lets the world know, that it is the place of gracious abode and rest. The real members of Christ's kingdom are *true good.* Though by nature the children of disobedience, they are renewed in knowledge and holiness after the image of God. Oh, how beautiful is Zion, the holy city and habitation of God!

But the parable teaches, that *the church in the present state is not pure; that it has a mixture of the children of the wicked one.* The field had tares among the wheat. All who belong to the visible kingdom of Christ are not of the same character. A part of those who number themselves among the people of God are the servants of sin. The church universal, and perhaps almost every particular church, contains some, who love the creature more than the Creator, and are slaves to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, or the pride of life. This was the case in the first and purest age of Christianity. Some,

who confessed Christ before men, forsook the doctrines and practice of Christianity, and thus manifested that they had never been washed from their sins. "They went out from us," says John, "but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest, that they were not of us." It is to be feared, that our best churches embrace many, who are in reality foes to truth and holiness. Of those, who surround the same sacramental table, eat of the same bread, and drink of the same cup, some are travelling in the way to Zion, others in the way to death. Those, who belong to the same visible church, will hereafter, in many instances, be separated from each other, and have the impassable gulf placed between them. A foundation for such a difference in their future condition is now laid by the difference which marks their characters. Some professors are as distant from others in the temper of their minds, as the bosom of Abraham is from the dreadful fire of perdition.

You will further learn from the parable, that *mingling the children of the wicked one with the children of the kingdom is the work of the enemy.* It is a lamentable circumstance of the church in the present world, that it contains such a mixture of characters; that so many profess the religion of Christ, without knowing its power. Though for wise ends it is divinely permitted, yet, in itself, it is a great evil. It is evidently desirable, in itself considered, that the church should contain those only, who are the devoted servants of Christ. When it is otherwise, it is the work of the enemy. The servants, surveying the field, and observing tares with the wheat, say to the householder, "Didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? whence then hath it tares?" He answers; *an enemy hath done this.*

In like manner, when we survey the visible church, and find that it contains many, who are strangers to grace, we must conclude that *an enemy hath done it.* Satan and his adherents hate the purity, and envy the happiness of the church, and therefore strive to introduce corrupt principles, false teachers, and hypocritical members. In this way the peace of the church is disturbed, the excellence of religion is sullied, and great advantage put into the hands of the adversary. It gratifies his malignant spirit to see those profess religion, who are dead in trespasses and sins; for he well knows, it will occasion offences, injure the church, and open the mouth of the opposing, blaspheming world.

But although this corrupt mixture in the church is to be mainly ascribed to the malice and subtlety of the enemy, *the real servants of Christ are not excusable.* It is partly through their supineness and sloth, that men of the world are so often found within the pale of the church. The enemy came and sowed tares, while the servants of the husbandman slept. Had they, according to their duty, maintained a strict and unremitting watchfulness, the enemy would have found it more diffi-

cult to sow his tares. If churches and pastors were suitably watchful; if they would attend with sufficient care to the characters of those, who offer themselves for admission; if they would faithfully and devoutly examine their exercises and sentiments, and observe their conduct, and seriously endeavour, according to the rules of the gospel, to keep the church pure; we might hope, there would be a much smaller proportion of unbelievers joining in profession with the followers of the Lamb.

But, alas! Christian churches, what matter of lamentation it is, to see so much negligence in this great concern. How little do Christians watch against the designs of the enemy? How does almost every one care for his own things, and not for the things of Christ? And have we not cause to fear, that some not only neglect to guard against the work of the enemy, but, with their own rash hand, sow tares among the wheat? Does not this charge lie with peculiar force against those who, without any discriminating regard to character, are earnest to gather as many as possible into the visible church?

Another observation, which naturally occurs, is, *that seasonable watchfulness and resolution may prevent evils, which, having once taken place, cannot be removed.* Faithful attention to the admission of members will do much more to secure the church from corruption, than equal exertion afterwards. By unremitting vigilance the servants might have kept the enemy from sowing tares. But after they were sown, it was too late to avoid the evil. When the servants, seeing what was done, and willing to make some amends for their negligence, proposed to go and gather up the tares, the Master said, *nay; lest, while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.* This is not intended to forbid the proper exercise of church discipline towards offenders; which cannot be neglected without great guilt. The intimation in the parable is evidently designed to guard against rash and irregular proceedings. The work, which the servants proposed, was of a hurtful tendency. So, should the servants of Christ proceed at once to extreme measures with every erring brother; especially, should they enter on the rash design of expelling all the ungodly, of gathering out all the tares, and purifying the church, they would not meet the approbation of their Lord. He would tell them, "nay." *It is a difficult, and, to you, an impossible work. Timely care and faithfulness would, indeed, have done much to prevent these evils. But now they must be left to the great day.* There may be many persons in the church, who give little evidence of the Christian spirit, and are far from conducting themselves according to their profession, who must, nevertheless, be suffered to continue in the church. There are many ways of manifesting the want of religion, for which a church cannot publicly censure a member. His conduct may be such, as to give the church just reason to fear he is unrenewed, and yet may not be such, as to authorise any direct proceeding against him. That a church censure

may be unexceptionable, there must be a manifest violation of gospel rules. There must be satisfactory evidence of palpable immorality. As, on the one hand, a person out of the church may have many seemingly good qualities, and yet not give that evidence of godly sincerity, which justly entitles him to a place in the church; so, on the other hand, the conduct of a visible member may be such, as denotes the want of piety, at least such, as leaves his piety very doubtful; and still may not be such, that the church can justly exclude him. Many must be continued in the church, who, with the selfsame character, could not properly be admitted, if they were out of the church. We must let the tares continue in the field where they are sown, though we ought not willingly to suffer them to be sown there. To introduce them is the design of the enemy; to *let them remain till the harvest* is the dictate of Christian prudence.

Here we may reflect on *our inability to know the hearts of men, and our consequent inability to make a certain distinction between the good and the bad.* The fruit of tares, is, indeed, essentially different from that of wheat, and when come to maturity and carefully examined, may be clearly distinguished from it. So when the whole practice of the impenitent is taken into view, and sufficiently understood, there is no difficulty in distinguishing them from the penitent. But at present, we cannot survey the whole conduct. Many parts of men's lives are concealed from our view, which, if known, might help us at once to determine their character. Many sins are committed in secret, the discovery of which would leave no doubt in our minds respecting those who commit them. But while men's sins are undiscovered, we may be totally deceived concerning their character. And most of all does our ignorance of *the heart* disqualify us for deciding the question of character. So ignorant are we of the heart, which essentially constitutes the character, that if we should take upon us the office of judge, we should be in great danger, in many instances, of clearing the guilty, and condemning the innocent. Many of those, whom we regard, as the disciples of Christ, may be false professors. Many that we esteem as gold, and silver, and precious stones, in the building of the church, may be hay, and wood, and stubble. While others, whom our wayward judgment condemns as worthless and vile, may be numbered among Christ's jewels. When we look with the most discerning eye upon the churches, we are unable to determine, who will be approved of God, and who will be rejected.

This introduces our last particular.

There is a time at hand, when the characters of men will be made known, and a complete eternal separation take place between the righteous and the wicked. This is a most important sentiment in the parable. "In the time of harvest, says the householder, I will say to the reapers, gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn." "The harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are

the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burnt in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things which offend, and them which do iniquity." Every man's character shall be tried; the all revealing day shall declare it. Though we can look only on the outward appearance, there is one who searcheth the heart, and is thus qualified to divide the good from the bad, and assign to all their proper places. Men may be unknown till the judgment day; but then every secret thing shall be disclosed. At present we cannot determine what proportion of the visible church are the children of this world; but the great day will declare it. Hypocrites may now pass for Christians; but then the veil will fall off, and the form which it covered openly appear. Some upright persons may now labour under such disadvantages, that we hardly imagine them the heirs of God. But when that day arrives, they will be presented faultless before their Father's throne. At present the peace of the church is interrupted, and its glory shaded by erroneous guides and unholy professors. But then the church will be freed from the incumbrance of hypocrites and unbelievers. Christ will gather out of his kingdom all things that offend. No unrenewed sinner can then hold his place among the people of God. How many, who have here come before God, as his people, conversed with the children of the kingdom, and with them celebrated the dying love of Jesus, will then be cast away, as chaff and stubble! How many, who have concealed a proud, self-righteous, or worldly heart under the mask of religion; how many nominal Christians, who have been secretly alienated from the cause of truth and sanctity; how many such will then be gathered as in bundles, and cast into a furnace of fire, where shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth! And their anguish and despair will be exceedingly aggravated by all the privileges they once enjoyed, and by all the hopes they once entertained. Awful, momentous day, which shall burn as an oven, and consume all the proud and wicked as stubble, leaving them neither root nor branch. Oh Lord, gather not our souls with sinners. How different from them will the saints appear! Delivered from all the corruptions of the world, and sanctified by the divine Spirit, they will be a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a pure and heavenly church; will sit on thrones, and forever shine forth as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father.

Churches of Christ, these are the words of truth, and shall surely come to pass. What manner of persons, then, ought we to be! With what watchfulness, and prayer, and holy diligence, should we wait for the day of the Lord! Behold, that day cometh quickly! Blessed are they, who are prepared for its solemn transactions.

PASTOR.

Selections.

PARLOUR PREACHING.

From the Evangelical Intelligencer.

INSTRUCTION may often be communicated with greater advantage in private than in public discourses. In the former, the speaker can address his hearers with a direct relation to the particular circumstances in which they are placed; whereas, in public preaching, his observations must of necessity be for the most part general: besides, in the small circle of a private family, there is a liberty and familiarity allowable, which cannot be admitted into the pulpit. The preacher can pause, and inquire whether he is understood; and in many cases the questions and observations of those whom he is endeavouring to instruct, will suggest to him the most important and appropriate ideas and sentiments.

The Lord Jesus Christ has left to all his servants an instructive example in this part of their duty. Several of his most beautiful and edifying discourses were delivered in private houses, and occasioned by the peculiar circumstances of those with whom he conversed.

The apostle Paul appears also to have spent a part of his time in communicating instruction in this mode; for in that most excellent and pathetic discourse which he delivered to the elders of Ephesus, he speaks of it as his practice amongst them, not only *to teach publicly, but from house to house.*

In modern times, it is to be lamented, that less is done in this way than could be wished. After making every allowance which candour requires on this subject:—admitting that young preachers, for several years after they appear in the pulpit, ought to spend a considerable portion of time in their studies, that they may prepare themselves for more extensive usefulness in after life; that some ministers of the gospel may be so circumstanced, that much of their time must be employed by an attention to the general interests of the church; that some must consume a large part in making that provision for their families which their people are either unwilling or unable to make for them; and that a few may actually be qualified (as I have heard the late president Edwards judged that he was) to do more good by writing for the public in his study, than by spending his time in much conversation:—after making as much allowance for these, and all other considerations of a similar kind, as truth and justice require, it is feared that much room will still remain for well founded complaint on this subject.

Some preachers do not possess the talent of readily introducing religious conversation, and therefore when they first make the attempt, it is with such a stiff and awkward air, that every per-

son present is made uneasy, and none more so than the speaker himself. Hence, perhaps, he too hastily forms the conclusion, that he is not, and never shall be, qualified for this species of instruction; and therefore, after a few unsuccessful attempts, relinquishes the object as hopeless. Others are so occupied in the investigation of dark and unprofitable speculations in theology, or in correcting and polishing their sermons, so that they may be brought to the highest pitch of elegance, that they have no time to spare for this tedious mode of preaching: And others again are so fastidious, that they cannot condescend to hold free and familiar conversation with ignorant people. They are immediately disgusted with the crude conceptions and blundering expressions of many with whom they converse, and their feelings, wound up to an excessive degree of refinement, cannot bear the shock of a collision with vulgar minds.*

We might yet mention another class of persons, who, although invested with the office of preachers of the gospel, consider it in no other light than any other trade. They pursue it for the sake of a decent livelihood, and they will do no more than they are obliged to perform. But if indeed they were to attempt instruction by religious conversation, they would be found utterly incapable of the task. If such a preacher should meet with a person suffering the smart of a wounded conscience, never having had any experience of such a case, he could neither sympathise with nor comfort the poor, awakened sinner. Or if he should happen upon a child of God labouring under perplexing doubts respecting his spiritual state, he would be entirely at a loss how to proceed with such a person. Having had no experience of the hidden life of a believer, no knowledge of his trials and conflicts, he would judge all these things to be the fruits of a distempered mind.

There is one thing, which, if duly considered, I think would have no small influence upon those whose office it is to teach, and which would go far to remove all impediments out of the way, which now hinder them from using every opportunity of leading men into the way of salvation: What I allude to is this, that the ministers of the gospel are accountable for the loss of every soul which perishes through their criminal negligence, whether that negligence proceed directly from sloth, from the pretence of study, from the affectation of refinement, or from indifference and carelessness. Every minister of the gospel ought to be able to say with sincerity, as Paul did in

* Do persons of this character, ever think of the condescension of the Saviour? Possessing intelligence and purity as far exceeding that of any human being, as the sun exceeds a ray of his own light, how kindly, patiently and familiarly, did he converse with the poor, the rude, the ignorant and the froward! Shall any one of his ministers feel an intolerable disgust at what their Lord and Master performed with pleasure! Shall dust and ashes refuse to mingle with their kindred, when God's eternal Son hath shown them such an example!

the above mentioned discourse, *Wherefore I take you to record this day that I am free from the blood of all men.*

But the obstacles, to what I call Parlour Preaching, do not arise wholly from the negligence or incompetence of the ministers of the gospel, but at least one half of the blame lies at the door of the people.

A preacher pays a visit to a wealthy, fashionable family. As a gentleman of character and education, he is treated with politeness and attention. He may eat and drink of the best; but if he should happen to think with himself, "My constant employment should be to promote the salvation of men: These, with whom I now am, are a part of my flock, for whom I must render an account; and they need advice and admonition as much as any;" and, in consequence, if he should introduce a discourse upon the important subject of salvation, what would probably be the effect? The company would be struck dumb with astonishment at his rudeness; and the snarl of disgust, the smile of contempt, or the look of disapprobation, might be expected, as the reward of his temerity.

If some polished buck, however, should think it no insult to the clerical character, to take his Maker's name in vain, this peradventure might give no offence to the same company: But if the clergyman should, in the most modest way possible, insinuate that this practice was offensive to God and painful to himself, it would probably be considered such an outrage on good breeding as to merit the high displeasure, not only of the culprit, but of every other person in the company. In such circumstances, it is easy to see, that there is little hope of doing good by *preaching*. If the preacher attempt it once, he will not be likely to have a second opportunity of instructing the same persons. So far from attempting parlour preaching in such circumstances as these, it will be the wisdom of gospel ministers to keep at a distance from companies, however honourable in the estimation of the world, where their sacred profession is disregarded. To be esteemed for their wit or vivacity in conversation, or for their elegant and polished manners, by those who despise their calling, is to them no honour, but a disgrace. In what is usually called *fashionable life*, there is, alas, little room for religion. In forming the regulations by which people of this condition are governed, the religion of Christ too seldom has any place in the system; and while persons are whirled in the vortex of fashion, there is very little hope of their salvation.

But obstacles to religious instruction not only exist among rich and fashionable people, but also among those of every condition.

In many houses the whole attention is given to the body; and when such are visited by the minister, all hands are set to work to provide for his gratification. Instead of one, there are often half a dozen Marthas, *who are cumbered with much serving*, and not one listening Mary in the whole circle.

In other places, he will have religious conversation enough, but to very little profit. Obscure

and knotty questions, commonly incapable of a certain solution, and of no consequence if one could be given, are treasured up, in order that they may be proposed to the minister. He must give his opinion, as to the mark set upon Cain, the thorn in Paul's flesh, and must tell who Melchisedeck was, and whom the witch of Endor raised up for Saul. But no one inquires, "What must I do to be saved? Or how may I grow in grace most successfully? What are the best evidences of a change of nature, or what ought a Christian to do in such and such given circumstances?" Others have an itch for controversy, and they feel the importance of being able to maintain or dispute with the minister, and perhaps of vanquishing him in their own conceit. There are many persons who glory in holding some opinions different from those commonly received. These they often bring forward to be discussed, not that they expect instruction or wish to obtain new light; for nothing can exceed the confidence and pertinacity with which these favourite opinions are held. The holder would sooner renounce the whole creed, than yield one of these notions which he cherishes with a fatherly fondness, considering them as the fruit of his own invention, the result of his own ingenuity; and therefore he would as soon suffer you to offer him the grossest personal insult, as to rob him of any of these opinions.

Again, the spirit of party among many people is so prevalent, that they will hear nothing willingly, receive nothing cordially, unless it comes through one particular channel. A single phrase, which they consider as belonging to a different system, even if it be a scriptural phrase, will shut the mind against all instruction from the person who was so unfortunate as to use it. Some serious people are as much offended at hearing the words, "election" and "predestination," as if they were never used in scripture, but invented by the enemies of God and religion.

But the chief obstacle with all classes is a want of *taste* for religious conversation. On any other subject they will be fluent, but here they are mute. If you begin conversation, you must carry it on yourself. Those who habitually neglect their salvation, take no pleasure in hearing of its importance. Especially, most people dislike to be interrogated by their minister, as to the condition of their souls, though it be done in a private, personal conversation. They are conscious that all is not well, and they cannot bear to confess the truth. Many therefore keep up an opinion that the exercises of the heart ought not to be spoken of, that it savours of ostentation, and is a mark of hypocrisy; but surely there can be no ostentation in a man's confessing to his pastor that he is an unconverted, inexcusable sinner; or in relating the imperfection of his duties, and the weakness of his graces.

Young people are generally much afraid to be interrogated about the concerns of their souls, and they dread the company of clergymen on this very account, fearing that they may be asked

whether they are engaged in the great work of their salvation.

But ministers should never cease from their endeavours. One word, seasonably and affectionately spoken, has often been the means of saving a soul from death. Private admonition and advice have been remarkably blessed in former times, and they are so still where they are diligently, tenderly, and prudently used.

ANECDOTES.

Mons. Foscue, one of the farmers-general of the province of Languedoc, by grinding the face of the poor, within his province, had amassed an immense sum of money, which, being known to the government, he was ordered to raise a considerable sum. But not being inclined to comply with this demand, he pleaded extreme poverty. And lest the inhabitants of his province should give information to the contrary, he resolved to hide his treasure in such a manner as to escape the most strict examination. He dug a kind of cave in his wine cellar, so large and deep that he could go down with a ladder; at the entrance was a door with a spring lock, which, on shutting, would fasten of itself. Lately Mons. Foscue was missing: diligent search was made after him every where, but to no purpose; at last his house was sold. The purchaser beginning to rebuild it, discovered a door in the cellar, and going down found Mons. Foscue lying dead on the ground with a candlestick near him; and on searching farther, they found the vast wealth which he had amassed. The purchaser supposed that he went into the cave, and the door by some accident shutting after him, he was out of the call of any person, and perished for want of food. He had ate the candle and gnawed the flesh off both his arms: and thus died this miser, this avaricious wretch, in the midst of his treasure, to the scandal of himself, and to the prejudice of the state.

DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

Two gentlemen were once disputing on the divinity of Christ. One of them, who argued against it, said, "If it were true, it certainly would have been expressed in more clear and unequivocal terms." "Well," said the other, "admitting that you believed it, were authorised to teach it, and allowed to use your own language, how would you express the doctrine to make it indubitable?" "I would say," replied the first, "that Jesus Christ is *the true God.*" "You are very happy," rejoined the other, "in the choice of your words; for you have happened to hit upon the very words of inspiration. St. John, speaking of the Son, says, "This is the true God, and eternal life."

We cheerfully comply with the request of a respected friend, to disseminate and preserve the following tender and beautiful lines by the Rev. Samuel Pearce, A.M. in the pages of the Panoplist. Editors.

THE GARDENER AND ROSE TREE.

IN a sweet spot, which wisdom chose,
Grew an unique and lovely Rose;
A flow'r so fair was seldom borne—
A Rose almost without a thorn.
Each passing stranger stopp'd to view
A plant possessing charms so new.
"Sweet flow'r!" each lip was heard to say—
Nor less the owner pleas'd than they:
Rear'd by his hand with constant care,
And planted in his choice parterre,
Of all his garden this the pride,
No flow'r so much admir'd beside.

Nor did the Rose unconscious bloom,
Nor feel ungrateful for the boon;
Oft as her guardian came that way,
Whether at dawn, or eve of day,
Expanded wide—her form unveil'd,
She *double fragrance* then exhal'd.

As months roll'd on, the spring appear'd,
Its genial rays the Rose matur'd;
Forth from its root a shoot extends—
The parent Rose-Tree downward bends,
And, with a joy unknown before,
Contemplates the yet embryo flow'r.

"Offspring most dear, (she fondly said)
Part of myself! beneath my shade,
Safe shalt thou rise, whilst happy I,
Transported with maternal joy,
Shall see thy little buds appear,
Unfold, and bloom in beauty here.
What, though the lily, or jonquil,
Or hyacinth no longer fill
The space around me—*all* shall be
Abundantly made up in *thee*.

"What, though my present charms decay,
And passing strangers no more say
Of *me*, "*Sweet Flow'r!*" yet *thou* shalt raise
Thy blooming head, and gain the praise:
And this reverberated pleasure
Shall be to me a world of treasure.
Cheerful I part with former merit,
That it my darling may inherit.
Haste then the hours which bid thee bloom,
And fill the zephyrs with perfume."

Thus had the Rose-Tree scarcely spoken,
Ere the sweet cup of bliss was broken:
The gard'ner came, and with one stroke,
He from the root the offspring took;
Took from the soil wherein it grew,
And hid it from the parent's view.

Judge ye, who know a *mother's* cares
For the dear tender babe she bears,
The parent's anguish. Ye alone
Such sad vicissitudes have known.

Deep was the wound; nor slight the pain
Which made the Rose-Tree thus complain:

"Dear little darling! art thou gone—
Thy charms scarce to thy mother known!
Remov'd so soon! So suddenly
Snatch'd from my fond maternal eye!
What hadst thou done? dear offspring! say,
So *early* to be snatch'd away!
What! gone *forever*!—seen *no more*!
Forever I thy loss deplore.
Ye dews descend, with tears supply
My now forever tearful eye;
Or rather come some *northern blast*,
Dislodge my yielding roots in haste.
Whirlwinds arise—my branches tear,
And to some distant region bear
Far from this spot, a wretched mother,
Whose fruit and joys are gone together."

As thus the anguish'd Rose-Tree cry'd,
Her owner near her she espy'd;
Who in these gentle terms reprov'd
A plant, though murm'ring, still belov'd:—

"Cease, beauteous flow'r, these useless cries,
And let my lessons make thee wise.
Art thou not mine? Did not my hand
Transplant thee from the barren sand,
Where once, a mean, unsightly plant,
Expos'd to injury and want,
Unknown, and unadmir'd, I found,
And brought thee to this fertile ground;
With studious art improv'd thy form,
Secur'd thee from th' inclement storm,
And through the seasons of the year,
Made thee my unabating care?
Hast thou not bless'd thy happy lot
In such an owner, such a spot?
But now, because thy shoot I've taken,
Thy best of friends must be forsaken.
Know, flow'r belov'd, e'en this affliction
Shall prove to thee a benediction:
Had I not the young plant remov'd,
(So fondly by thy heart belov'd)
Of me thy heart would scarce have thought,
With gratitude no more be fraught:
Yea, thy own beauty be at stake,
Surrender'd for thy offspring's sake.
Nor think, that, hidden from thine eyes,
The infant plant *neglected* lies—
No,—*I've another garden*, where
In richer soil, and purer air
It's now transplanted, there to shine
In beauties fairer far than thine.
Nor shalt thou always be apart
From the dear darling of thy heart;
For 'tis my purpose *thee* to bear
In future time, and plant thee there,
Where thy now absent offset grows,
And blossoms a celestial rose.
Be patient then, till that set hour shall come,
When thou, and thine shall in new beauties bloom:
No more its absence shalt thou then deplore,
Together grow, and ne'er be parted more."

These words to silence hush'd the plaintive Rose,
With deeper blushes redd'ning now she glows,
Submissive bow'd her unrepining head,
Again her wonted, grateful fragrance shed:
Cry'd, "Thou hast taken only what's thine own,
Therefore, thy will, my Lord, not mine, be done."

Review of New Publications.

A Sermon, delivered at New-Boston, N. H. February 26, 1806, *at the Ordination of the Rev. E. P. Bradford to the pastoral care of the Presbyterian Church and Society in that place. By Jesse Appleton, Congregational Minister in Hampton, N. H.* pp 32. 8vo.

THIS is a serious and ingenious discourse. It is well adapted to the occasion, is written in a pure and perspicuous style, and displays such modesty and candour, as are very congenial with the delicate subject of catholocism. The author does not appear "fierce for moderation;" but seems to have aimed at steering a middle course between the extremes of bigotry and latitudinarianism. And had he only kept within these proper bounds, he would have deserved much praise, and given no occasion for the following remarks, which have occurred to some judicious and candid readers.

1. Mr. A. appears to have mistaken the plain and obvious meaning of his text. It is 1 Cor. i. 10. "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment." These words Mr. A. allows must enjoin upon the Corinthians either unity of sentiment, or unity of affection. If we regard the mode of expression, we must naturally conclude, that the apostle meant to enjoin unity of *sentiment*, or to teach the Corinthians to speak, to think, and to judge alike upon religious subjects. And it clearly appears from the following parts of the epistle, that they stood in need of such an exhortation from the apostle Paul, who was their spiritual father, and the master builder in forming them into a church state. For they had fallen from their stedfastness, and run into numerous and dangerous errors. They had erred respecting the divine call of the apostle, respecting church discipline, the duty of marriage, the nature and design of the Lord's Supper, the support of gospel ministers, things offered to idols, spiritual gifts, and even respecting the great doctrine of the general resurrection. Upon this head the apostle reproved them sharply. "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day, according to the scriptures; and that he was seen of Cephas, and then of the twelve; and last of all he was seen of me also. Therefore whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed. Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, *how say some among you that* there is no resurrection of the dead?" If the apostle meant to suit his epistle to the present state of the Corinthians, he could not have addressed them upon a more seasonable and necessary subject, than that of unity of sentiment,

from which they had so grossly departed. It is, therefore, most natural to consider his words in the text as referring to their unchristian doctrines, as well as to their unchristian feelings. But admitting Mr. A.'s exposition to be right, and allowing that the apostle did refer *solely* to unity of affection; then it is queried by what logic Mr. A. could deduce from a passage, which had no respect to controverted points in divinity, this doctrine; "that there may be *comfort of love and fellowship of the Spirit* among those Christians, whose *opinions in divinity* do not fully coincide."

2. Whether this doctrine bear any legitimate relation to the text or not, it seems to be *too indefinite* to require either proof, or even illustration. For no man can be found, of any religious sect or party, who will not readily allow, that "Christians, whose opinions in divinity *do not fully coincide*, may enjoy *comfort of love and fellowship of the Spirit*," or sincerely unite in brotherly love. A doctrine or leading sentiment in a public discourse ought to be not only true, but important.

3. There seems to be no great propriety in the concessions, which Mr. A. makes previously to the proof of his doctrine. They are all very true, but neither necessary nor pertinent. What if Christians may differ as much in meaning, as in words; what if their diversity of opinions may not be matter of indifference; what if some may differ essentially from others; what if some may be criminal for imbibing their errors; and what if the nearer any agree in the belief of the truth, the more closely they may unite in affection:—Supposing all these things to be true, they have no tendency to prepare the way for the illustration or support of the truths in question, and therefore, it is conceived, they ought to be considered as mere protuberances to the discourse.

4. Mr. A.'s mode of reasoning in proof of his doctrine, is both redundant and deficient. His argument derived from the sources of error is redundant; and his argument, drawn from the conduct of those eminent men he mentions, is deficient, because it does not appear, *from any thing he has said*, whether they acted right or acted wrong in exercising mutual esteem and affection. But whether he has succeeded or failed in supporting his doctrine, its truth will be universally believed.

5. Mr. A. triumphs without a victory, in his remarks upon the fourteenth of Romans. All the apostle there said goes no further than to prove, that men may differ in *non-essential points*, and yet be sincere Christians, and exercise mutual love and esteem. This nobody denies. But some have denied, and probably will continue to deny, that the apostle meant to justify any man in the least *voluntary* error.

6. Mr. A. misrepresents the opinion of those whom he considers as opponents. He says, "it has been the opinion of some respectable men, that, should those, who embrace error, actually embrace the truth, they will then *know* that their present opinion is right, and their former wrong." We are acquainted with none who maintain, that

men *always* know they are right in opinion, when they are so; but we believe many justly maintain, that when men are really right in opinion, *respecting subjects which admit of certainty*, they *may* then *know* that they are right. There are many subjects in divinity, which do not admit of *certainty*; and perhaps, the doctrine of infant baptism, which Mr. A. mentions, may be one. In this, and similar cases, a man may be right in opinion, and never certainly know in this life, that his opinion is entirely agreeable to the word of God. He may gain so much light as to exclude doubt, which will justify him in maintaining his opinion, and acting upon it. But when a man has erred in respect to a divine truth, *which admits of certainty*, and afterwards embraces that truth, he *may* then *know* that he *knows* it, and that his former opinion was wrong. This, however, may not be the infallible consequence, because his knowing the truth, and knowing that he knows it, are two very different things, and the former may exist without the latter.

Finally, notwithstanding our confidence in the rectitude of Mr. A.'s intentions, it appears to us to be the general tendency of his discourse to make men believe, that it is more difficult to discover truth and detect error than it really is. It tends to make men feel too easy and unconcerned about their religious errors. It also tends to favour the growing and dangerous notion, that it is of more importance to avoid bigotry than heresy. And it seems calculated to create a belief, that there is no important distinction between real Calvinism, and real Arminianism; which belief may be productive of many hurtful effects.

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD ORDERING AND CONDUCTING THE AFFAIRS OF MEN.

A sermon preached in the Independent or Congregational church, Charleston, South Carolina, Sept. 14, 1806. *By* ISAAC STOCKTON KEITH, D. D. *One of the pastors of said church. Published by request.* W. P. Young. Charleston. pp. 56.

THE length of the title violates the rules of classical taste. The title of a book becomes its name, and like the name of a child, should be such as may be conveniently spoken.

It is doubted, whether it add any thing to the usefulness of a sermon to inform the public, that the publication was earnestly solicited by respectable characters; that the author felt himself constrained to comply. Better say as Mr. Henry does concerning one of his books; "If I thought it needed an apology, I would not consent to publish it." On the other hand, if a work need no apology, the author should make none. This we think to be the case with the discourse now before us.

It was occasioned by the desolating storm which took place in the Southern States in August, 1806. "My times are in thy hand," is the text. In order to exhibit the leading ideas included

in this passage, the author observes, 1. That the times of man's *natural life*; 2. the times of the *spiritual life* of believers, including all the varieties of their religious experience; and 3. the time of their death, are in the Lord's hands.

The following paragraph, from the 2d head of discourse, is given as an agreeable specimen of the sentiment and style of the sermon.

"For a while they (that is, they who are to be the final subjects of salvation,) are permitted to remain with "the world which lieth in wickedness," "to walk after the ways of their own hearts, and in the sight of their own eyes," departing farther and farther from God, wandering in the fruitless pursuit of happiness, through the various scenes of worldly vanity, and amidst the multiplied snares of the cruel destroyer, "who leads the children of disobedience captives at his will," exulting with a most malicious triumph, in the expectation of soon plunging them headlong into everlasting perdition: But the time of divine mercy and love at length arrives, when these infatuated servants of sin must be ransomed; when these wretched captives of Satan must be delivered; when "these lost sheep must be brought back to the fold of their heavenly Shepherd." When in their mad career of bold impiety, unrighteousness, and licentious indulgence; or in their thoughtless progress down the broad road of worldly business, of fashionable amusement, or of the decent, lifeless forms of religion and virtue, they were hastening to eternal destruction; they are mercifully arrested by an invisible power. For now the Divine Spirit, given by the Father, through the mediation of the Son of God, comes to carry into effect the great design of redeeming grace and love in their favour. To this end, he awakens their solemn attention to the demands of the law, and the calls of the gospel. Thus he convinces them of sin, awakens their fears of the wrath of God due to it, and constrains them seriously to consider and inquire "what they shall do to be saved?" Then pointing their views to the only and the all-sufficient Saviour, revealed and offered in the gospel, he suffers them not to remain on any fallacious ground, on which they would be ready to feel themselves secure, and to promise themselves peace; nor will he allow them to conclude that they have found rest to their souls, till they have "fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose is the only name given under heaven by which any can be saved." And now, in a day of divine power, they are made willing, cordially willing, to forsake their sins, to renounce their self-righteousness, to give up the world, and "to suffer the loss of all things," which were once most dear to their hearts, "that they may win Christ, and be found in him," and become his genuine disciples and followers. For his sake, they are now disposed "to deny themselves" in respect to all worldly interests and pleasures, which may be incompatible with their obligations and their duty to him; they are now ready, also, "to take up the cross" of reproach, or of any other kind of suffering, to which they may be called on account of their attachment to him, and their fidelity in his service; and thus they are prepared, cheerfully, "to follow their Lord and Saviour" to his heavenly kingdom, in that way of obedience and trial which he has marked out in his gospel, and which, to their natural pride and self-love, heretofore appeared to be the most unpleasant and irksome, beset with the most formidable difficulties, and surrounded with the deepest and most discouraging gloom."

In the sermon and note the author gives an interesting and affecting account of the extensive destruction of the fruits of the earth, and of the lives of men occasioned by the tempest, and forcibly inculcates that pious attention to the events of divine providence, which is equally the duty and happiness of all rational creatures.

A Sermon, delivered at Ashburnham, May 22d, 1806, at the interment of Mr. John Cushing, jun. who expired at the house of his father. By Seth Payson, A. M. Pastor of the church in Rindge. Published by request. Leominster. S. & J. Wilder, 1807.

WHILE the pilgrimage of mortals is through a vale of tears, while "man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward," that religion must be peculiarly dear to him, which affords the strongest consolation under the pressure of calamity, and teaches him in the best manner the heavenly art of educing good from evil. This is the glory of the Christian religion; and surely the views it presents are admirably calculated to animate the desponding mind, and to cheer the drooping spirits. What can be more so, than the assurance of a superintending Providence, ordering all things for the best; than the prospect of an eternal weight of glory, infinitely counterbalancing the evils of time, though secured and enhanced by them; than the example of the wise and good in all ages, and of the divine Author of the religion himself, all of whom were made perfect through sufferings?

Such are the topics of consolation, on which the ministers of the gospel are called frequently to dwell. In the sermon under review we find them presented in a clear and forcible manner, well calculated to command attention, and to convey solace and instruction.

The text is from the epistle of St. Peter. *Brethren, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial, which is to try you, as though some strange thing had happened unto you.* After an appropriate introduction, he proposes his plan of discourse in the following words. "We are here taught that those, who are beloved of God, are exposed to severe trials; and that the heavy afflictions, laid upon them, afford no just cause of surprise."

Under the first general head we find the following observations.

"Above all things else is the honour of God and the glory of the Saviour dear to the Christian. To what painful sensations then is he subject in a world, where this glory is neglected, this love despised, and that precious blood trampled under foot, which he knows was the price paid for the ransom of his soul, and which has brought peace to his conscience, and heaven to his heart?"

That the Christian has no cause for surprise on account of the afflictions he is called to endure, is shown from a number of considerations, that are brought into view, collectively, in the following paragraph.

"Forewarned that the Christian's life is a warfare; that Christ himself was made perfect through sufferings; encompassed with a cloud of witnesses, who rose out of great tribulation, and now stand with the Lamb on Mt. Zion; assured that the sufferings of time are designed to make us partakers of the divine nature, and that they will so soon be crowned with immortal bliss; under these views, do the severest trials afford any ground to suspect, either the truth of the promises, or our interest in them? Do they not rather afford ground to welcome the hand, which corrects us for our benefit, and has opened so many springs of consolation for the support of his afflicted people? What thanks are due to the Father of mercies for the refreshing hopes and comforts of the gospel? That God reigns; that he

exercises a special providence toward those who put their trust in him, and that his wisdom, power, and goodness are continually employed in preparing them for future glory, are truths, which need but to be realized, to raise the mind above the evils of time, and to fill it with all joy and peace in believing."

The subject is then applied to the occasion, which produced it. The deceased is represented as a very worthy man; and his profession, as a merchant, leads to a train of useful reflections on the importance and advantages of commerce. The consolations of the gospel are more particularly addressed to the bereaved, and the author concludes with seriously applying the lessons of Providence to his audience at large.

On the whole, we have been happy to find that the discourse, we have been reviewing, comported with the character, its author has sustained, as a man of sense, and a Christian; and we cordially recommend it to the perusal of our readers.

Milner's History of the Church of Christ.

[Being informed that an American Edition of MILNER'S CHURCH HISTORY is contemplated,* we introduce under this head, for the information of the American public, the following concluding remarks, on this excellent work, of the Reviewers in the *Christian Observer*.]

IN forming an estimate of Mr. Milner's labours, it must be kept in mind, that the design of his history was entirely new; and that he had therefore to contend with the various difficulties which must be encountered by those who pursue a path hitherto unattempted. It was necessary that he should be thoroughly acquainted with all those materials which had occupied the attention of former writers of Church History, with a view to ascertain their bearing upon the particular objects of his research. But it was also necessary, that, taking a wider range, he should penetrate recesses of private history unexplored by his predecessors; and that, in order to form a true judgment concerning the sentiments and character of individuals, he should peruse with attention original writings, which before had been almost consigned to oblivion; a task far more laborious, and less amusing than commonly fall to the lot of authors. The works of other ecclesiastical historians exhibit indeed, in splendid characters, the lives of men who bore a distinguished rank in the church; they record the actions of the great and honourable of the earth; of kings, and bishops, and councils. In the work before us, names "unknown to song," but inscribed in the book of life, are drawn from their obscurity; and, anticipating that day in which a true and impartial judgment of merit will be formed, and in which the righteous only shall be had in everlasting remembrance, they are held up to the regard and admiration of mankind, as monuments of the transforming power of divine grace.

But it is not only on account of his patient industry, and unwearied research, that Mr. Milner de-

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* By Messrs. Farrand, Mallory, & Co. in Boston.

serves the grateful thanks of the church of Christ, but likewise for his strenuous endeavours to correct the opinions of mankind on many important points, by leading them to form their decisions according to truth, and not according to the false criterion of worldly estimation. We deem those parts of his work by no means the least valuable, where he has combated, and always, we conceive, with success, the artful and insidious misrepresentations of Hume and Gibbon, by which a general currency had been given to sentiments tending greatly to the depreciation of Christianity.

We think that Mr. Milner particularly excels in accuracy of discrimination, and soundness of judgment; and we are disposed to attribute his superiority in this respect to his invariable practice, a practice in which we fear that as an historian he will be found to stand nearly alone, of estimating men's characters and actions by the unvarying standard of the word of God. His knowledge of the human heart was deep, his views of religion and of its influence just and extensive; he possessed also an originality and independence of mind which prevented his servilely copying the plans or adopting the sentiments of preceding writers. His remarks on the different characters which pass under his review, manifest a more than usual share of acute observation, while they exhibit a pleasing spirit of Christian candour and charity. In the impartiality with which he notices the faults and defects of Christians, whose lives in the main were excellent, we recognize an imitation of the fidelity of the sacred writers, whose historical details describe men as they are, while their precepts point out what they ought to be. Our author's appreciation of the merits and defects of Wickliff, Luther, Erasmus, &c. will exemplify this remark. We mean not to assert, that Mr. Milner has in no instance erred in the view he has given either of facts or characters; or that he has been in no instance biassed in his judgment by his peculiar sentiments in theology; but thus much we feel ourselves justified in asserting, that, in general, we may safely rely not only on the representation he has given of facts, but on the estimate he has formed of characters. The love of truth evidently constituted a striking feature in our author's mind. That sterling integrity which dares not flatter, and will not deceive, is very conspicuous in his work; nor can any one, who reads it with care, entertain a doubt that the object of its author was, not to gratify his own vanity by composing a book which should enhance his literary fame, or to obtain popularity by accommodating himself to the prevailing taste; but, with simplicity and plainness, to set before his readers the genuine principles of the gospel of Christ, and to exemplify their effects on the spirit and conduct of such as cordially embraced them.

The strong and uniform attachment shewn by Mr. Milner to those truths which are peculiarly entitled to the appellation of *evangelical* ought not to be omitted in the enumeration of his merits as the historian of the church of Christ. With re-

spect to some religious opinions, there will always be much difference of sentiment among even the true followers of our Lord; but all who have a fair claim to that character will feel themselves under great obligations to Mr. Milner for the boldness and ability with which he has asserted and vindicated the evangelical doctrines of original sin, salvation by grace through faith in a crucified Redeemer, and sanctification by the Holy Spirit. He loses indeed no opportunity of illustrating these grand truths, and particularly the doctrine of justification by faith, of which he never speaks but with a manifest impression of its importance. Should any of his readers conceive, that he lays too much stress on the single point of the necessity of faith in the atonement and grace of Christ, let them reflect, that in the view of Mr. Milner, and as we conceive in that of the inspired writers, it is a point most intimately and inseparably connected with every branch of Christian verity, lying indeed at the root of all true religion; and that with him as with them, it is always a practical truth, producing necessarily, when rightly and cordially received, holiness of heart and life.

Perhaps there is no excellence so predominant in Mr. Milner's work, as the genuine piety which appears in every page. The author does not speculate respecting Christianity with the cold, philosophical spirit, so congenial to the taste of the present age; but feeling all his own present happiness and future hopes to be centered in the gospel, he commends it with honest warmth to the affections of his readers. His heart seems to glow with love to the Redeemer of mankind, whose glory he labours to exalt. He appears also deeply interested in the welfare of his fellow creatures, and shews a constant solicitude to promote their salvation. And while the luminous piety of his own mind beams forth upon his readers, and kindles their devout affections, his writings are eminently calculated to enlighten and instruct them. We rise from the perusal of this history with far other impressions of the value and excellence of Christianity, than are produced by almost any other historical work: our faith is strengthened, our hope elevated, and our souls animated with a desire to be followers of those who through faith and patience have inherited the promises. Defects may undoubtedly be pointed out, but they are chiefly the defects of a vigorous mind grasping at great objects, and indifferent to those smaller points which might distract the attention. Much allowance must also be made, when, as in the present case, a work of such magnitude and difficulty is executed in the short intervals of leisure redeemed from numerous and laborious employments, and amid the interruptions occasioned by frequent attacks of sickness.

On the whole, we do not hesitate confidently and earnestly to recommend this history as a valuable addition to the library of every Christian; as a work in which instruction is happily blended with interesting narrative, which the young may be allured to read for the entertainment it affords, and which the advanced

Christian will prize for the edification he may derive from it. We are greatly mistaken if it will not prove highly useful in imparting just views of the nature of true religion, and in leading many to feel the supremely important obligations of Christianity. The pious author has already entered into his rest, and is enjoying the fruit of his labours in a better world; but though dead, he yet speaketh, and we have no doubt will long continue to speak to the improvement, comfort and everlasting benefit of thousands.

Religious Intelligence.

UNITED STATES.

An Account of the origin and progress of the mission to the Cherokee Indians, in a series of Letters from the Rev. Gideon Blackburn to the Rev. Dr. Morse.

LETTER VI.

Maryville, Feb. 8, 1808.

Rev. Sir,

Suffer me to interrupt the course of my narrative by filling this sheet with a description of one of the dances of our Indians, called the Eagle-tail dance. I am persuaded that it was once a religious ceremony; that it originated in the East; and is enigmatical. Though it has passed through the lapse of ages, it still wears a strong appearance of the mysticism of the ancient mythology. But as religion was then used as a machine of state policy, this might have been used in that way.

The occasion of the dance is the killing of an eagle. Immediately on this joyful event, the town to which the person belongs, with some other towns in the vicinity, send word to some town or towns at a distance, that on a certain day, they will bring them the tail of an eagle. Before the day appointed, the party, who are to bring the tail, carefully select from the woods a stick having many limbs, which they cut off two or three inches from the stem, and on the top they spread the tail and bind it fast with ligatures, and also carry with them most of the feathers of the eagle, bound in little bundles: while the party, who are to receive them, provide a block of wood, carved in the figure of a man's head, fasten it to a pole, and set it in the ground in the spot designed for the place of meeting. This done, all assemble in the town-house, and wait the approach of their friends, who come carrying the tail in triumph, attended by the sound of the drum and other music. Having arrived at a convenient place, and sufficiently near to be distinctly heard by those in the town-house, they are formed into order by their principal chief, who distributes the bunches of feathers among the chiefs and warriors of his party. They then raise the war whoop, which is three times repeated, and as often answered by those within. They march forward about 100 yards; halt, and whoop once; are distinctly answered; so a second and third time. At the third of these single shouts, those within march out, directing their course towards the figure of the man as the central point. When arrived within ten steps of each other they halt. The head men of each party distinguish themselves in front. After a moment's pause, the chief of the town company draws his sword, vapors astonishingly, and, at length,

with menacing brow and horrid threats, he draws towards this figure, (a feigned enemy) and gives it a fatal blow, lays it prostrate, then leaps, brandishes his sword, and exerts every nerve, as if in the severest contest. He then exultingly passes to the chief of the opposite party, waves his sword over his head and the heads of the other chiefs, dancing before them, and singing of his warlike exploits. As soon as this scene is over, one of the chiefs gives him a bunch of the feathers, with which he returns in extatic triumph, and gives it to one of his men. A second chief goes through the same ceremony, is treated the same way, and returns with his prize, and so on, till all the bunches of feathers are transferred to the town party. Then the head man of the advancing party bears the tail in triumph, and presents it to the chief who first drew his sword; he receives it with dignity, and bears it, with solemn and majestic step, to the place where the supposed slaughtered enemy lies. He sticks it in the ground, and each one brings his bunch of feathers, and hangs it on the cut branches of the pole. The companies then unite, and one, expert in the mystery of the dance, leads them through mysterious evolutions to the townhouse. After many maneuvres they enter and march round it, as if surveying a field of battle, until a signal is given, and the ceremony ceases till after dark, when a new and interesting scene commences. A fire is kindled in the centre of the townhouse, and a band of music, consisting of drums, cane whistles, gourds, and shells, filled with pebbles or shot, with a monotonous vocal sound, are placed on one side at a distance from the fire, and at one end of the band a man is seated on a deerskin spread on the ground. The music proceeds nearly half an hour before any other exercises. At length a headman rises, holding some warlike instrument, which he brandishes over the heads of the musicians, who instantly cease, though the drum is still lightly beaten. He then proceeds to tell some exploit or warlike action of his life, accompanying the narrative with all the gestures, which might have been supposed to attend it. At the conclusion he gives a whoop, which is answered by the band of music; the rest in solemn silence. He then begins to sing and dance with all the motions of a triumphant warrior. This continues about the space of a minute; the music in the mean time proceeding, until he again waves his instrument over their heads, at which they stop, and he proceeds, as before, to tell some other feat, and so on, till all his achievements are recited. At the close of the whole, he passes by the man seated on the deerskin, and throws him something, either money or clothing. He then sits down, and another rises, goes through the same ceremony, and retires; and so they proceed, until all the chiefs and warriors are fully satisfied. At the close, the collection, thus made, is divided; a large dividend is given to the person, who killed the eagle, and the remainder distributed to the band of music. As soon as this is done the males all partake of a meal in the townhouse, in which the females are not permitted to join. Supper being ended they mingle promiscuously, and spend the remainder of the night in their usual scenes of merriment.

This ceremony is so much degenerated, that very few of the younger ones know how to lead it, and none, even of the oldest, (as they themselves say) understand it so well as their fathers; nor indeed do they any of their dances or ceremonies. If we reflect on the usages of the Egyptians and yet see their hieroglyphics, as well as some other of the eastern nations, we may conjecture the origin of our Indians, and may probably infer the mode of their passage to America. Many of their ceremonies are evidently Jewish. If they are not descended from that nation, they must have descended from those sufficiently near to have learned their customs and mode of worship.

I shall remark more fully on this point in a future letter. I am, dear Sir, yours in the gospel of Jesus Christ,

GIDEON BLACKBURN.

FOREIGN.

RUSSIA.

On the state of civilization of the Russian people, in relation to religion and religious instruction. From letters written in March and April, 1806, by a well informed German, who has long resided in Russia.

THE multitude among the Russians is, in regard to mental culture, in the lowest degree of degradation; the labourer, the peasant, the mechanic, the soldier, can neither read nor write. It would be too favourable if we calculated that one in a thousand of these classes could read. Catharine II. indeed, founded schools for the people in the several metropolitan cities, where reading and writing are taught *gratis*: but very few participated in these advantages, and those only town-people. In Moscow, (*Moskwa*, in the Russian orthography) where the population is 400,000, these schools had only 1000 scholars. The scholastic establishments which have been instituted in this reign are not properly calculated for the lower classes; and probably not only this generation, but several succeeding generations will pass away ere the Russian peasant will be in such a situation, that ability to read will become necessary for his children.

The Greek church, however, has provided that her members shall not remain wholly unacquainted with the Bible. In the daily church service, which lasts many hours, besides the liturgies, which are read, lectures are delivered on various parts of the Old and New Testament, especially on the psalms, the gospels, and epistles, so that these three divisions of holy writ are read through more than once in a year, and therefore the constant attendants at church are sufficiently, and often astonishingly well acquainted with them. Nevertheless, the number of these constant attendants at church is but small. The church translation which has been introduced, is in the Sclavonian tongue, but not in the proper dialect of the country. On account of its so frequent use in the church service, this language is understood by most who attend church regularly, but not by all. A translation in the common dialect of the country is much to be desired. But this would not only meet with many difficulties on the part of the translator, in relation to the language itself, but still greater and more essential on the part of the lower classes of the people. The necessary revision of the many orthographical errors, in the MSS. used in the 17th century, which were so gross as completely to pervert the meaning, although their use had been appointed by the patriarch Nicon, occasioned, as is well known, a schism which issued in the sect of Separatists, called *Raskolniki*, (Schismatics) or, as they call themselves, *Staroviertzy*, (old believers) which to the present moment is troublesome to the church, and to the state. To avoid such breaches in future, a law has been passed, by which no Bible or any part of a Bible, and especially no book used in the church, is allowed to be printed, except under the immediate inspection of the highest spiritual tribunal, the holy directing synod, and at their press; with ecclesiastical letters, in imitation of manuscript.

No Greek Bibles are found in Russia, because among a hundred clergymen not one understands Greek. The few Greek testaments which are used in some schools are procured from Leipzig. In the 16th century a Russian Bible was printed in Poland, which however has never been acknowledged as canonical in that country. Copies of this work are now great rarities. In the middle of the 18th century, a superb edition of the Bible appeared in folio; of which a copy cost 5*l*. Towards the close of that century, two editions of it appeared at Kiew (one in 3 octavo volumes, price 2*l*. another in 3 folio volumes.) These editions might amount to 5 or 6,000 copies. Now, as it is supposed that Russia contains 40 millions of inhabitants, it may hence appear how scarce Bibles must be among them. Tracts of 100 wersts and more are known where a copy is considered as a rarity. In a peasant's family none is found; and very seldom in that of a nobleman or merchant. Even among the clergy there is a great want of this sacred book; and no desire is

expressed to possess it. Those who cannot read, call themselves, and often with lamentation, blind. Others satisfy themselves with hearing the extracts from the Bible read daily, or on feast days. But in general little religious inclination is found in Russia, owing to the total want of religious education. No one, from the noble to the peasant, receives any other religious instruction, than the abovementioned hearing of the liturgy and lectures in the churches. And it would be very difficult to remove this inconvenience.

Ten years ago a very important religious society undertook the distribution of religious writings, and as they could not interfere with the books used in the church, they attempted to circulate edifying tracts *gratis*. But the society was suppressed, as suspected of political views. Besides these editions of the Bible, there are books of psalms, gospels, and epistles, in different editions, of all sizes, and at different and very low prices; intended chiefly for the use of the church. But those who desire it may provide themselves with Bibles, in Petersburg, Kiew, Moskwa, (although not at all times) at regular fixed prices, from the book warehouses of the synod. It is easiest to procure psalm books, they being the most current.

Since the year 1766, German colonies have been established in the government of Saratow on the Wolga. There are thirteen Protestant parishes, at which are stationed Lutheran and Calvinistic ministers, who have been sent from Germany and Switzerland. From the present high price of the necessaries of life, they have much difficulty to maintain their families. The *Unitas Fratrum* (Moravians) provide Bibles printed at Halle, for their establishment in Sarepta. They receive from Germany, yearly, 100 Bibles, as many Testaments, about 50 Psalters, together with 250 or 300 books of other kinds. They have no printing press, and the expense of printing in Moskwa (which is the nearest printing place in the country) or at Petersburgh, is greater than that of procuring the books in Leipzig. The expense of paper and printing in the former places is very high; for example, an edition of the feast psalms of the Moravians published in Moskwa, of 5 to 600 copies, cost in Sarepta, 18 to 20 roubles; each copy being 2 octavo leaves. Among the colonies on the Wolga, there are many Protestant families who have no Bible, but most have a New Testament. The great distance at which the German colonists are from their country, greatly increases the difficulty of procuring books of all kinds. The expenses of carriage, packages, commissions, and tolls, double the original cost at Leipzig on each book. For example: a Bible printed in Halle, which costs in letter press 12 groschen, (18 pence) and as much for binding, costs, at the colonies on the Wolga, about 3 roubles, (a rouble about 2s. 6d.) and from 3 to 20 copies according to the binding; which will only be of common leather, coloured, black, or marbled, with red edges: but in black cordovan, with gold edges and lettered, the same Bible in large octavo costs 5 roubles: and if bound in Sarepta, still more; therefore, they are generally ordered bound. The Moravians in Sarepta have made many attempts to spread the Christian religion among the neighbouring Calmucks; but hitherto without much effect. A translation has likewise been made of several extracts from the Bible into the Calmuck language, which has not been printed.

The empire of Russia is so extensive that many things may be true of some parts, which cannot properly be applied to others. Near the great towns, for instance, a love of reading may prevail by very much more than it did twenty years ago, yet letters and books may not have reached the county districts.—Can the Bible Society assist? [*Panorama.*

ITALY.

CARDINAL Cassoni, Secretary of State to his holiness the Pope, has published the following note:

ROME, FEB. 2, 1808.

"His holiness, Pius VII. being unable to conform to all the demands made on him by the French government, and to the extent required of him, as it is contrary to his sacred

duties, and the dictates of his conscience; and being thus compelled to submit to the disastrous consequences which have been threatened, and to the military occupation of his capital, in case he should not submit to such demands:

"Yielding, therefore, in all humility of heart, to the inscrutable determinations of the Most High, he places his cause in the hands of the Almighty, and being unwilling to fail in the essential obligations of guaranteeing the rights of his sovereignty, he has commanded us to protest, and formally protests in his own name, as well as in that of his successors, against any occupation whatever of his dominions, being desirous that the rights of the holy chair should remain, now and henceforward, uninjured and untouched. As the Vicar on earth of that God of Peace who taught by his divine example humility and patience, he has no doubt but his beloved subjects, who have given him so many repeated proofs of obedience and attachment, will make it their peculiar study to preserve peace and tranquillity, private as well as public, which his holiness exhorts, and expressly commands; and that far from committing any excesses, they will rather respect the individuals of a nation, from whom, during his journey and stay in Paris, he received so many flattering testimonies of devotion and regard."

The True Patriot.

ANDREW DORI, of Genoa, the greatest sea captain of the age he lived in, set his country free from the yoke of France. Beloved by his fellow citizens, and supported by the emperor Charles V. it was in his power to assume sovereignty, without the least struggle. But he preferred the virtuous satisfaction of giving liberty to his countrymen. He declared in public assembly, that the happiness of seeing them once more restored to liberty, was to him a full reward for all his services: that he claimed no pre-eminence above his equals, but remitted to them absolutely to settle a proper form of government. Dori's magnanimity put an end to factions that had long vexed the state; and a form of government was established with great unanimity. Dori lived to a great age, beloved and honoured by his countrymen; and without making a single step out of his rank, as a private citizen, he retained, to his dying hour, great influence in the republic. Power founded on love and gratitude was to him more pleasant than what was founded on sovereignty. His memory is reverenced by the Genoese; and in their histories and public monument, there is bestowed on him the most honourable of all titles, "Father of his country, and restorer of its liberty."

Literary Intelligence.

ASIA.

THE Emperor Alexander has just founded a College at Teflis, in Georgia. An ecclesiastic of that country is placed at the head of the establishment, who is a man of great literary knowledge, and understands the Russian language. Translations into the Georgian tongue of several useful works are already begun; and in return, translations into the Russian language of the work of the celebrated Georgian poet, Russawell, and of a renowned novel writer named Sergei Tmogwell, are expected.

JERUSALEM.

A PLAN of the city of Jerusalem, and its environs, as they were at the time of Christ, is recently published at Madrid. It includes representations of the edifices and places mentioned in scripture; the walls, gates, and squares of that famous city; particularly the road along which the Saviour of the world was conducted from the Garden of Olives to Mount Calvary. To the above is added, as a supplement, the recent excursion of a Spaniard who gives an account of the present sanctuaries of Palestine.

We believe Spain is the only European country which of late years has maintained an intercourse with Jerusalem: the Spanish sovereign, not many years ago, liberated the monastery in this city from a heavy arrear of debt due to the Turks, &c.

TARTARY.—*Discovery of a City.*

In the island of Taman, in the Black Sea, the foundations of an ancient city, which must have been very large, although not mentioned in history, were lately discovered: it is said that a similar discovery has been made in a district of Siberia.

List of New Publications.

A Sermon, delivered at the funeral of Dr. Joshua Lathrop, who died Oct. 29th, 1807, aged 84. By Joseph Strong, D. D. Pastor of the first church in Norwich. Hartford, Lincoln & Gleason.

The signs of perilous times. A Sermon, delivered at the public fast, in West Springfield, April 7, 1808. By Joseph Lathrop, D. D. Pastor of the First Church in West Springfield. Springfield. H. Brewer.

Propositions for amending the Constitution of the United States; submitted by Mr. Hillhouse to the Senate, on the twelfth day of April, 1808, with his explanatory remarks. New Haven, Oliver Steele, & Co.

The Clergyman and People's Remembrancer, or an essay upon the importance of the ministerial character, as connected with a pure and evangelical style of preaching; agreeable to the doctrines and articles of our Episcopal Church. By William Percy, D. D. the third minister of St. Philip's and St. Michael's. Charleston, (S. C.) J. Hoff. 1808.

Horæ Juridicæ Subserivæ: a connected series of notes, respecting the geography, chronology, and literary history of the principal codes and original documents of the Grecian, Roman, Feudal, and Canon law. By Charles Butler, Esq. of Lincoln's Inn. With additional notes and illustrations, by an eminent American civilian. 8vo. pp. 136. Philadelphia, published by Wm. P. Farrand, and Co. and Farrand, Mallory and Co. Boston. 1808.

A Sermon, preached March 13th, 1808, for the benefit of the Society instituted in the city of New-York, for the relief of poor widows with small children. By Samuel Miller, D. D. one of the pastors of the United Presbyterian churches in the said city. New York. Hopkins & Seymour. 1808.

A Discourse, delivered in the church in Hollis Street, April 13, 1808, at the interment of the Rev. Samuel West, D. D. late pastor of said church. By John Lathrop, D. D. pastor of the second church in Boston. With a Biographical Memoir of the Rev. Dr. West, written and published at the request of a committee of the Society in Hollis Street, Boston. By Rev. Thomas Thacher, A. M. A. A. S. of Dedham. Boston. Belcher & Armstrong.

Zion's Pilgrim. By Robert Hawker, D. D. Vicar of Charles, Plymouth. To which are added select pieces by different authors. pp. 204. Boston. Lincoln & Edmands. 1808.

In the press of Collins & Perkins, No. 189, Pearl street, New York, a new work, entitled "A Hebrew and English Lexicon for the Psalms, with points; in which all the words that are found in the Hebrew original are alphabetically arranged, and carefully explained. Accompanied by a compendious grammar of the Hebrew language, together with remarks explanatory of the idiomatical expressions which occur in the Hebrew psalms. By Clement C. Moore, A. M.

Farrand, Mallory and Co. have also in the press, Buonaparte's last campaigns in Prussia, Saxony, Poland, &c. ornamented with engravings, exhibiting the likenesses of Buonaparte, king and queen of Prussia, and emperor of Russia. A translation of this work, by Samuel Mackay, A. M. is now completed.

Lincoln & Edmands will shortly put to press, Mason's Spiritual Treasury for the Children of God; being a Reflection for each morning and evening in the year, from select texts of scripture, 2 vols. 12mo.

Obituary.

CHARACTER OF THE REV. SAMUEL FOXCROFT,

Who died March 2, 1807.

In the early part of his life, previous to receiving the honours of college, he hopefully found the consolations of religion. His studies were consequently directed to a preparation for the gospel ministry. By an increasing attachment to the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom, he had the strongest proofs in riper life, that his early hopes were well founded.

Trusting in the free and sovereign grace of God, through the merits of Christ, he experienced enjoyments, which were not like "the morning cloud and early dew." The church in New Gloucester was gathered, and he ordained its pastor in January, 1765. He sustained this relation to them, for the term of twenty eight years, though for the last part of the time, by reason of a feeble constitution, he was unable to bear the fatigues of all its duties. Being much employed in the study of the sacred scriptures, a large proportion of them were familiar to his memory. In regard to the leading, as well as the more abstruse doctrines of holy writ, the strength of his understanding and soundness of his judgment were acknowledged and appealed to by many of his brethren in the ministry. The character of his mind was such as fitted him for very agreeable and instructive conversation with those who visited his study. His passions were naturally strong and his disposition cheerful. Though a well instructed scribe in the duties of his holy profession, he was modest and unassuming. Being under the influence of an humble principle, he seemed estranged from every thing like envy or vanity. As he took a very affectionate part with all who were afflicted, he had not an evil eye towards those who were prospered.

Necessarily prevented by a sickly constitution from great activity in the cause of his Master, he frequently made bitter complaints of his own unfruitfulness. Though much in prayer, he would seem enraptured in that duty, at the time of the morning and evening sacrifice. At the recollection and mention of the atonement by the Lord Jesus Christ, for his chosen people, he would seem animated by uncommon transports of joy. In his confessions, intercessions and petitions, he was fervent for the glory of God in his own good, in that of his beloved family, his Christian brethren, and the prosperity of Zion in general. For several years past, he interested himself but little in the present world. When health would permit, until he was almost entirely deprived of his sight, which happened by means of a violent cold, within two years past, he employed much time either in writing or transcribing excellent sentiments for the benefit of those who should live after his departure.

As a parent he was tender and affectionate, using every Christian endeavour to promote the best temporal and eternal interest of those near to him by the ties of nature, often urging them from the tenderest considerations to be reconciled to God. He was careful never to violate the confidence of friendship. Sensible of the dependence and infirmity of our nature, he prayed much for others, and requested an interest in their addresses. He often manifested a spirit of charity and benevolence. In this his Christian brethren were repeatedly and honourably remembered, not long before his death. As he sometime feared lest he should be cowardly, and dishonour the cause of his glorious Redeemer, at the near approach of the king of terrors, God granted him a sudden removal. He was translated from this to the world of light, without being permitted to perceive the melancholy approaches of the last enemy. He was spared a tedious succession of pain and sickness, and obtained a release from all violent struggles. The garment of his mortality suddenly dropt off, and he fell asleep in the Lord.

"*Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, for they rest.*"

CHARACTER OF REV. SAMUEL WEST.

Rev. Samuel West, D. D. was the sixth of twelve children, the fourth of sons of Rev. Thomas West. His mother was Drusilla Pilsbury, the daughter of a French Protestant who fled to this country on the revocation of the edict of Nantz. He was born at Martha's Vineyard, Nov. 19, (o. s.) 1738, and died 10th April, 1808.

Such was the high estimation, in which this most amiable man and excellent minister was held by the community, that a long or laboured panegyric, would be wholly superfluous. In the place of his nativity; at Cambridge, where he had his education, and received academic honours in 1761; in the several places of his residence, between his leaving college and settlement at Needham, in 1764; in that place, and the surrounding country, he left that "good name which is better than rubies," and his "memory will be justly blessed." In this capital, where he spent the last 19 years, but one sentiment is felt, but one opinion entertained respecting his professional and personal worth. In his neighbourhood he was most peculiarly regarded and beloved; in his parish, he was all which his parishioners could desire; in his family, he was a most precious companion and counsellor. Few men die more extensively valued, probably no pastor was ever more tenderly endeared to his flock. Such was the interest he manifested in all their concerns, such his peculiar attentions to them in all circumstances, that in the hearts of young and old he holds the place of a father and a friend.

His literary reputation can be but transiently noticed in this brief sketch. Several occasional discourses, and many moral and religious essays, from his pen, are before the public.* While they evince a strength of reasoning, and accuracy of discrimination which ensures them a value with the learned, they possess that winning charm of the pathetic and persuasive, which makes them a manual of inestimable value to his friends, and an auxiliary of much importance to general improvement.

For several years before his death his health was much impaired; and for many months, he was wholly confined to his chamber and couch. He was exercised with much pain, and at times with severe distress, during this long season of lingering; and through all evidenced the unwavering faith and unfailing hopes of a genuine servant of Jesus Christ. Those who have seen and heard him in his sickness, can never forget how like a saint he looked, how like a sage he spoke. And though the radiant composure of benevolence and piety, which beamed from his countenance is dimmed, though the mild accents of resignation and truth which flowed from his tongue are silenced by death, his friends have for their consolation, that he now enjoys a happier society. While every acquaintance feelingly exclaims,

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* 1. *A Sermon at the ordination of the Rev. Jonathan Newell, at Stow, 11th October*, 1774. Edes & Gill, 1775. 8vo. pp. 31.

2. *A Sermon, at Dedham, 2d church, March*, 1785, *occasioned by the death of two young men, brothers. &c.* Edes & Son, 1785. 8vo. pp. 23.

3. *Two Discourses at Needham, 1st parish, on the Public Fast, 7th April*, 1785. Edes & Son, 8vo. pp. 39.

4. *A Sermon on the Day of General Election, May* 31, 1786. Adams & Nourse. 8vo. pp. 32.

5. *A Sermon at his instalment in Boston, March* 12, 1789, *with the charge by Dr. Belknap, and right hand of fellowship by Dr. Eckley.* I. Thomas & Co. 1789. 8vo. pp. 31.

6. *The Christian Soldier. A Sermon before the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company, June* 2, 1794, *the anniversary of their election.* Manning & Loring. 1794. pp. 19.

7. *A Sermon on the national Thanksgiving, Feb.* 19, 1795. S. Etheridge. 1795. 8vo. pp. 20.

8. *Greatness the result of goodness. A sermon occasioned by the death of George Washington, &c. 29th Dec.* 1799. Manning & Loring. pp. 17.

9. *A series of Essays in the monitorial department of the Columbian Centinel, with the signature of "an old man," commenced on Saturday, Nov.* 29, 1806, *and continued to Aug.* 22, 1807.

"I am distressed for thee, my brother, very precious hast thou been unto me," let this also be their purpose and their prayer: "Let me live the life of the righteous, that my last end may be peace like HIS."

DR. JOSHUA LATHROP.

THIS venerable and worthy man, died at Norwich, (Con.) Oct. 29, 1807, in the 85th year of his age. Dr. Strong, in a sermon delivered at his funeral, characterizes him, as "universally respected both for his amiableness and goodness. Unambitious to shine in the higher walks of life, and not at all elated by the pride of wealth, Dr. Lathrop pursued that humble course, and practised those accommodating manners, which did not fail to secure an unusual share of esteem and love. His enemies, if he had them, were silenced into respect by his virtues; and his friends were numerous and sincere. It is not the language of flattery, to say, that he was "an Israelite indeed." It was during his collegiate life, that in the judgment of charity, he commenced that race of godliness, in which he stedfastly persevered. The term allowed him in his Master's service was unusually long, nor did he spend it in idleness. Though in his eighty-fifth year, he by no means outlived his usefulness. Neither debility of body or mind prevented his bringing forth much fruit, even at that very advanced period of life. During a number of his last years, visits, dictated by friendship, constituted one of his chief employments; and it was noticeable, that of his visits, the indigent and unfortunate commanded a large share. We may presume the remark of St. James was often in his mind, and certainly it was written upon his life; "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction." There are none among his acquaintance but must feel the death of Dr. Lathrop. Though he had lived many years, it was not long enough to satisfy the wishes either of his friends or of the unfortunate. By his death, the church of which he was a member and a pillar has experienced a great loss; the community is deeply interested in the removal of so deserving a member; his neighbours will find that they have no small cause to weep over him; and his consort and children lament their loss as irreparable. They will, however, bear in mind the goodness of God, in continuing him so long; and will reflect with much satisfaction that he led a respectable, pious and useful life, died a Christian, and that charity pronounces he is now so "clothed upon, that mortality is swallowed up of life."

Ordination.

ON Wednesday last, the Rev. Joshua Huntington was ordained as Colleague with the Rev. Dr. Eckley over the church and society worshipping at the Old South Meeting House, in Boston. The exercises were devout and animated, and afforded high gratification to the numerous auditors assembled on the occasion. The Introductory Prayer was made by the Rev. Mr. Gray; the Sermon delivered by the Rev. Dr. Morse; the Ordaining Prayer by the Rev. Dr. Eckley; and the Charge given by the Rev. Dr. Lathrop. The Right Hand of Fellowship was then offered by the Rev. Mr. Channing, and the concluding Prayer made by the Rev. Mr. Lowell.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Erastus, on "the Jewish cities of refuge"—*Omicron*, on the question, "Are Christians forbidden in the scriptures to eat, at common meals, with an excommunicated person?"—*Cyprian*, "on the name Christian;" and *Thelesus*, "on the prevalence and evil of loose and indistinct ideas;" also a sketch of the life of Professor Gellert, and a continuation of the review of Dr. Rees' Cyclopœdia, shall, if practicable, all appear in our next.

The Editors regret that a failure in a communication which they forwarded to a respected correspondent, on *Church Government*, has prevented their receiving in season for this number, his contemplated observations on that topic. The pages of the Panoplist, though shut impenetrably against angry controversy, are open at all times to a free and candid discussion of all subjects, which affect the purity and welfare of the churches. On this ground they readily admitted the "Questions relative to church government, proposed and answered," by *Titus*. On points of this kind, where a diversity of opinions exist among good men, the editors by no means feel themselves pledged for the correctness of every thing inserted in the Panoplist. While the subject is under discussion, they will admit whatever is candidly stated, on all sides, and may assist in forming a correct result. We invite our correspondents, who feel interested in the subject above stated, to transmit their sentiments upon it. And if we may be permitted to suggest a form of communicating them, we would beg leave to recommend, as the most unexceptionable and inoffensive, that adopted by *Titus*. We wish every writer to give his own sentiments with fairness and a Christian spirit, without particular reference to those of others, and let the public decide for themselves.

☞ As the agency of the Panoplist is to be changed next month, and a *New Series* of this work is to commence, on an improved plan, the editors earnestly solicit all who are in arrears, to make immediate payment to Mr. CALEB BINGHAM; as the editors wish to close all their accounts, and to inform the public of the state of their *charity fund*, which they have not yet been able to do, owing to the distant and scattered situation of their subscribers, and the uncertain state of their debts.

The present subscribers to the work will be considered, as patrons of the new and improved series, unless information is received to the contrary. New subscribers are requested to transmit their names early to FARRAND, MALLORY & Co. Suffolk Buildings, State Street, Boston, the future Publishers of the Panoplist, and where subscription papers may be obtained, early in June, by those who wish to extend the circulation of this work.

END OF VOLUME III.